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Notes and Documents

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID
OBSERVES INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY
WITH POLITICAL PRISONERS OF SOUTH AFRICA
(11 OCTOBER 1991)**

[Note: A solemn meeting in observance of the International Day was convened on 11 October 1991 by the Special Committee against Apartheid. Mr. Walter Sisulu, Deputy President of the African National Congress of South Africa and Mr. David Dinkins, Mayor of the City of New York, were among the special guest speakers.

Contained herein are excerpts from statements made at the solemn meeting.]

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I. STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. SAMIR SHIHABI (SAUDI ARABIA),
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

It is a pleasure to join the Special Committee against Apartheid and members of the international community as we observe this day of solidarity with South African Political Prisoners.

The question of apartheid has for long been one of the primary preoccupations of the United Nations General Assembly which regards it as a very repugnant system, whose eradication is long overdue.

The United Nations consensus Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa reaffirmed this commitment of the international community, when it resolved to bring to a speedy end the deplorable situation of the Black population in South Africa resulting from its racist policies and practices and replace it with a governance based on the principle of justice and peace.

As we observe this day, acknowledging as well the progress that has been made recently, it is incumbent on all of us to recognize that we have not yet attained the desired goal of freedom and equality for all. Several issues stand unresolved. The Secretary-General made this clear when he pointedly observed in his second progress report on the implementation of the Declaration that there have been delays in taking the requisite measures to create a climate necessary for negotiations, particularly with regard to political prisoners and exiles.

The release so far of some political prisoners is certainly a step that we consider positive. However, we could hardly overlook the fact that several hundreds of political prisoners continue to languish in apartheid jails.

The people of South Africa have shown a commitment towards ending apartheid through negotiation. But the continued imprisonment of anti-apartheid opponents under various guises, the relapse to violent acts especially targeting anti-apartheid leaders and reluctance to begin genuine effort to put in place transitional arrangements are matters that are inimical to such a spirit and that invoke renewed concern. The South African authorities have a particular obligation to facilitate the conditions agreed upon in the recent peace accord which would enable all parties concerned to participate effectively in the process. We, members of the international community must continue to lend our moral influence and political support to help bring about this essential climate for negotiations that will lead to the peaceful transformation of the country.

In observing this day, we remember all those who have spent, and are spending today, the best years of their lives in South African prisons because of their beliefs. We honour men like Nelson Mandela, and Walter Sisulu who is here with us today. More importantly, we remember those who, like Steven Biko, perished in apartheid prisons. We express the hope that such a fate will not fall upon those who remain today in apartheid jails. As we mark this important occasion, we reaffirm our commitment to the attainment of the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. To this end the international community will remain vigilant to monitor developments in South Africa with the utmost concern and to respond through encouragement, pressure and assistance, as appropriate, with a view to enhancing the eradication of apartheid. In this spirit we, once again call upon the South African authorities to show good faith by releasing the remaining political prisoners. When this is done, only then can we all really embark on the road to a free, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

**II. STATEMENT BY MR. CHINMAYA RAJANINATH GHAREKHAN (INDIA),
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

It is with great satisfaction that the members of the Council note the presence here today of Mr. Walter Sisulu, Deputy President of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), who for so many years was a political prisoner in South Africa.

On this occasion last year, the President of the Security Council reiterated the Council's commitment to previous Council resolutions on South Africa. The intervening period has been marked by several encouraging and positive developments which constitute significant confidence building measures, on the one hand, and by other factors on the other which continue to give rise to concern. The positive developments include the repeal of legislation that has provided the legal foundations of apartheid and the agreement reached between the Government of South Africa and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) regarding the safe and dignified return of the refugees and exiles. On the other hand, the members of the Security Council remain deeply concerned at the continuing violence in South Africa, particularly in the Transvaal and Natal, which has claimed many lives. The members of the Council express the hope that the Peace Accord which was signed on 14 September 1991 will lead to an early end to the senseless and costly violence.

The members of the Security Council again urge the completion of the Pretoria Minute prisoner release process, and

the release of any political prisoners who continue to be detained in the so-called independent homelands, and in this context express the hope that a procedure will be found to deal with disputed cases.

In conclusion, the members of the Council encourage the Government of South Africa, together with all forces favouring a democratic change, to develop a concerted and positive national programme for the ultimate democratization and restructuring along non-racial lines of South Africa towards a free, united, non-racial and democratic society in which fundamental human rights for all are guaranteed.

**III. STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, DELIVERED BY
MR. VASILIIY SAFRONCHUK, UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL
FOR POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS,
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

This is an appropriate occasion for the international community to reaffirm its total commitment to the complete eradication of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic, non-racial society in South Africa. I have reiterated my own commitment and resolve in this regard in my second report on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa to the current session of the General Assembly.

Overall, the process towards the end of apartheid in South Africa, although halting, remains on course. Major apartheid legal structures have been repealed; several measures necessary for a climate for negotiations as well as peace initiatives have been undertaken; and South Africa appears to be moving ahead towards the beginning of substantive negotiations. In my second progress report on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration, I mentioned that the process in South Africa may be relatively lengthy and even vulnerable. I had in mind the dangers presented by the potential for violence and destabilization generated by extremist groups, opposing the democratic transformation of the country, as well as the destabilizing potential of the socio-economic inequalities, which are the heavy legacy of apartheid.

The United Nations Declaration on Apartheid provides for the release of all political prisoners as one of the indispensable prerequisites for the creation of a climate conducive to negotiations. In response to this call, the Government of South Africa has released, over the past year, more than 1,000 political prisoners. This notwithstanding, there are still some hundreds who, for a variety of reasons, remain in jail in South

Africa. I believe this matter could be resolved, possibly through the establishment of mechanisms to deal with disputed cases, allowing for the prompt release of all those who have committed offences for political reasons.

In regard to other developments, I have been encouraged by the agreement reached between the South African Government and UNHCR regarding the return of political exiles. On the positive side, it appears that the principles envisaged in the United Nations Declaration have generated broad support by those who wish to see a non-racial, democratic South Africa. The broad consensus that human rights must be protected in a democratic South Africa is also encouraging. The signing of the National Peace Accord on 14 September 1991 by all the major political organizations in South Africa is another welcome development, which, with the cooperation of all concerned, should provide a framework to bring an end to political violence in the country. However, over and above all this, it is imperative that the impartiality of the security forces in the maintenance of law and order, for which the Government bears final responsibility, should be scrupulously maintained.

An end to violence and the release of all political prisoners would contribute to free political activity, so essential for the conduct of negotiations for a new constitution. The convening of an all party forum where transitional arrangements, the mechanism to draft a new constitution and its basic principles, can be negotiated and agreed upon, is at the top of the political agenda in South Africa today. This will constitute an essential step to carry the process forward. It is therefore imperative that the unresolved issues, including not least the release of all the remaining political prisoners, be dealt with promptly.

The international community must intensify its efforts to expedite the implementation of the Declaration. Encouragement, pressure and assistance, as envisaged in the Declaration, would need to be suitably applied as the process unfolds, bearing in mind that the ultimate objective is the establishment of a non-racial democracy in South Africa.

IV. STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE DAVID DINKINS, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

It is an honour for me to participate in this Day of Solidarity with South African Political Prisoners. ... On behalf of 8 million lovers of justice who reside in New York, I thank you and I applaud you for your tireless efforts to bring justice to South Africa. ...

In the same year that Dr. Martin Luther King spoke so eloquently about the indivisibility of justice, another great American, President John F. Kennedy, reminded people throughout the world that the United States stood for the same principle internationally: "We stand for freedom", he said. "That is our conviction for ourselves; that is our only commitment to others."

...

In keeping with this legacy, the City of New York has figured prominently in the international effort to bring an end to the only legalized system of racism in the world today - South African apartheid.

If today America stands for freedom, South Africa stands for oppression.

...

Apartheid is one of the world's greatest evils since American slavery - and its legacy promises to be every bit as difficult to erase.

But erase it we must - and it is in that hope that the City of New York has continued to apply sanctions even after others have proposed to lift them. Sanctions have brought us within sight of the precious shores of freedom; now is not the time to abandon ship.

In fact, sanctions are needed now more than ever before - for what other international check or balance can help ensure the good-faith participation of the South African Government in the upcoming transfer of power to a new democratic Government?

The creation of a Constitution is indeed the most critical moment in the life of any nation. ... Consider our own example.

...

In 1787, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton argued in favour of the abolition of slavery in the new federal constitution then being developed.

Georgia and South Carolina threatened not to join the Union if slavery were prohibited. Had Washington prevailed in that crucial moment, the Constitution of the United States of America would not have treated my own ancestors as subhuman. The entire course of United States history would have been changed.

...

My friends, can there be any doubt that the most crucial moments of the international sanctions movement lie not in the recent past, but in the immediate future? In the creation of a new state, the cost of flaws is far too great - we must keep the pressure on apartheid until it finds its rightful place in the dustheap of history.

We must measure the current Government of South Africa not by the dark standards of its past behavior, but by the shining standard of freedom. Examined in this bright light, the National Party's proposal for a new Government reveals many flaws.

In this proposed new system, the power of the executive is diluted by a rotating presidency on the Yugoslavian model. Unfortunately, the failure of a weak executive to address ethnic strife in Yugoslavia can be measured these days in tombstones.

Besides, it is not just the plan the National Party has disclosed that has led people to lose faith in the existing Government - it is also what the National Party has not disclosed.

The secret funding of Inkatha has damaged our trust in the present administration.

And the continued detention of hundreds of political prisoners also draws the credibility of the Government into question.

I am here today to express our solidarity with those prisoners - and with the people of South Africa.

**V. STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON (SWEDEN)
CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF TRUSTEES OF
THE UNITED NATIONS TRUST FUND FOR SOUTH AFRICA**

Since our meeting here last year, we have witnessed continued heartening developments in South Africa. Let me point at the latest achievement so far, the signing of the National Peace Accord. Although primarily aimed at curbing the township violence, the commitments to recognized democratic principles and to economic and social reconstruction give it a resonance far beyond the issue of violence.

It is particularly encouraging to note the recent pronouncements by South African authorities and ANC officials

indicating that an all-party conference on constitutional negotiations could soon be convened.

The positive events in South Africa during the past year also include the release of a large number of political prisoners and a marked decrease in the number of detainees. Nevertheless, not all political prisoners have yet secured their freedom. Independent human rights sources in South Africa estimate that a minimum of 300 and possibly as many as 800 remain in prison. Concern is also expressed that many hundreds of people continue to be put on trial for protesting against repressive laws still in force.

Furthermore, and in spite of the National Peace Accord, the politically motivated violence continues, as it seems, unabated. This is indeed alarming. We expect the South African Government to live up to its commitments regarding political prisoners and to take all measures necessary to come to grips with the disquieting violence.

At this juncture in South Africa there is a continuing need for the kind of humanitarian, legal and relief programmes that the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa has funded over many years. The release of political prisoners and the return of thousands of exiles are creating a continuing demand of assistance for reintegration into South African society. At the same time, while people continue to be detained and political trials continue, there is a continuous need for the provision of legal assistance.

During this period of transition in South Africa the Trust Fund intends to follow its traditional agenda and at the same time progressively extend its activities to related areas. The Committee of Trustees has for example indicated that it would lend increasing support to legal actions to address legitimate grievances of victims of apartheid.

...

The campaign sustained over decades by the United Nations and other organizations for the release of South African political prisoners is today bearing fruit. The release of a large number of political prisoners over the past 18 months has been particularly encouraging. The international community should, I believe, use today's occasion to take stock of the progress achieved so far, consider the work ahead and press with renewed vigour and determination for the freeing of those remaining political prisoners in South Africa.

...

Wherever people are no longer arrested or imprisoned for their political beliefs, wherever normal political activity is allowed to take place, we can rest assured that freedom and democracy are not far behind. Let us therefore hope that this is the last time we observe this Day of Political Prisoners in South Africa.

**VI. STATEMENT BY MR. WALTER SISULU, DEPUTY PRESIDENT
OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA**

...

... It is doubtful that without your sustained intervention I would, today, be standing before you instead of continuing to languish behind bars in one of apartheid's dungeons. It must be said that, in a direct sense, we owe it in part, to your sustained and principled support for our struggle that:

- Our president, comrade Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, and many of my fellow former political prisoners have gained release;

- Our national chairman, comrade Oliver Reginald Tambo, and other political exiles have come back home;

- ANC and all other organizations of our people have either been unbanned or de-restricted;

- Many of the fundamental laws of apartheid have been repealed.

These are all positive developments for which you must justly share the credit. However, I have come to the United Nations not to announce the death of apartheid, but to alert the world that the Pretoria regime continues to imperil the agenda for South African liberation. I have also come to strike a note of caution against premature optimism which could unwittingly result in the prolongation of apartheid. Those of us who have returned either from exile or from prison have returned not to freedom but to apartheid. Like all our other compatriots, our abiding historic challenge remains unaltered: to continue struggling until apartheid is eradicated and a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa is born. Some of our compatriots still remain in jail and many more are still in exile; although ANC has been unbanned, it remains the organization of the unfree. We are still completely voteless and our political activities are still not free from repression.

Though many political prisoners have gained release from apartheid jails, the Pretoria regime, contrary to previous

agreement with us, continues to use its own arbitrary and narrow definition of political prisoner which excludes many patriots convicted for politically motivated offenses - including acts of violence against apartheid. According to the Human Rights Commission, at least 1,000 such individuals remain in apartheid jails with no foreseeable prospect of release. In addition, there are approximately 12 patriots, such as Mthetheleli Mncube and Robert McBride, whom the regime has unilaterally lumped together into what it calls the grey area category. It maintains that their cases cannot be covered by a general amnesty even though they were convicted for acts committed in their line of service to our national liberation struggle. It insists that each individual be held personally responsible for his or her actions against apartheid.

... While we continue to demand the immediate and unconditional indemnification of all political exiles, the regime has granted selective and limited indemnity covering only the categories of: (a) leaving the country illegally; and (b) belonging to a banned organization such as ANC and Umkhonto We Sizwe up to 2 February 1990, when such organizations were unbanned. Beyond that, especially in instances where an individual may, in any way, have been involved in the armed operations of Umkhonto We Sizwe, the regime insists that each case be considered on the basis of its merits as arbitrarily defined by the regime. It also insists that each person so affected be personally answerable for his or her actions. As a result, out of a total political exile population of over 20,000 members of ANC to cite but one example, only 7,000 have been indemnified and slightly more than 3,500 of these have been repatriated.

The Public Safety Amendment Act, which empowers the regime to impose the state of emergency, is still intact. Certain sections of the Internal Security Act have been suspended and the effect has been to shorten the period during which an individual can be held in detention without trial. Otherwise, the act itself remains on the statute books of apartheid. More than a hundred political trials continue, including that of the leaders of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

As came to light in the middle of July 1991, the regime has been using public funds for partisan and politically motivated covert operations. Through its security establishment, it has secretly been funding the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). ...

This was in turn linked to its intention to use the anti-sanctions positions of IFP in order to try to prematurely end the international isolation of apartheid South Africa. It must be recalled that the violence that began in the province of Natal and has since spread to other provinces of our country, began

largely at the instance of IFP - the same organization that has gone on to become the most visibly active purveyor of this violence.

... It must also be remembered that not too long after the violence began, we voiced the suspicion which, strengthened by steadily mounting evidence, grew into a conviction that senior ranking individuals in the regime's security establishment or the regime itself had a veiled but directly active hand in the promotion of that violence.

The regime responded with protestations of innocence. Contrary to our formal and informal demands and appeals, it also refused to take decisive action to stop the violence. All this was happening at the very moment that the regime and ANC were beginning to engage each other in preliminary exploratory talks intended to clear the way for a peaceful resolution to the South African conflict. On the strength of all these, we cannot help but draw at least two interrelated and alarming conclusions. At the very moment when the regime ought to have been trying to create a necessary climate for meaningful negotiations, it was undermining the possibility of the emergence of such a climate by directly or indirectly promoting violence. At the very same time it was professing its commitment to the search for a peaceful solution to the South African conflict, it was actually waging war against those organizations and individuals most committed to peace.

We cannot but question the sincerity and seriousness of the regime's commitment to a negotiated settlement of the conflict in our country. ...

It is important to underline the possibility that the regime's professed commitment to necessary change has no greater depth than a public relations exercise to deceive the international community and that its real objective is to salvage as much as it can of apartheid if not to completely restore it.

...

On 4 September 1991, the National Party at its federal Congress unveiled its constitutional proposals for a future South Africa. ... They turned out to be no more than a euphemistic rehashing of the National Party's more and more thinly disguised refusal to abandon its commitment to the preservation of apartheid by insistence on its perceived need to protect group rights at the expense of democratic majority rule.

More specifically, as indicated in our official statement on the subject, these proposals are an attempt to institutionalize government by coalition. On the one hand there is White minority

racism determined to survive and to preserve its hold on a virtual monopoly of our country's wealth and the implied economic power. On the other hand, there are the popular forces of the national movement against apartheid and racism and for freedom and democracy and their non-negotiable demand for a just, equitable and productive redistribution of our country's latent and developed resources, without which apartheid cannot be truly eradicated. In such circumstances, to institutionalize government by coalition is to attempt to reconcile what, by definition, cannot be reconciled. It is a prescription for the unworkability of government. Furthermore, the overwhelming thrust of the checks and balances contained in the proposals are so blatantly biased against any potential majority political party and so obviously in favour of minority political parties, that they effectively stamp the proposals as a formula for minority domination.

In a more practical and immediate sense, this arrangement gives to racists the absolute political power to veto popular initiatives against de jure or de facto initiatives against racism and for the economic and social development of the Black majority which has been thoroughly disposed and chronically impoverished by apartheid. This proposal is nothing less than a scheme to make the victims of apartheid accomplices in the perpetuation of apartheid through the preservation of its most essential and lasting effects.

We reject these proposals which provide additional grounds for our suspicions about the real intentions of the National Party and the Pretoria regime. The regime's refusal to allow a full and independent investigation of its covert activities in the wake of the "Inkathagate" exposures has predictably also strengthened suspicions about the anti-democratic agenda of the National Party to the point where it is now felt by a growing number of our people that engaging the National Party for pre-talks, talks-about-talks or negotiations for a democratic future is most likely to be futile.

This in turn has sharply underlined the urgent need for the creation of an interim government of national unity to supervise the process of transition away from apartheid and towards the creation of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

It would be dishonest to pretend that the Pretoria regime has not taken some important steps toward the creation of the necessary climate for negotiations.

However, it would be even more dishonest to claim that these steps amount to the creation of that necessary climate. More to the point is the fact that the regime's covert actions against

its political opponents and its subsequent refusal to have those secret activities investigated fully and openly, has nullified whatever progress it may have made toward the creation of the necessary climate for negotiations.

It has also effectively turned the regime itself into the most serious obstacle to a negotiated solution to the South African conflict. The constitutional proposals of the National Party and their virtually explicit rejection of the fundamental principle of majority rule which is essential to democracy can only serve to place a stamp on this unfortunate fact.

Existing international pressures, especially sanctions, against apartheid South Africa were intended to help eradicate apartheid. Apartheid is still in place. In addition, it is actively fighting for survival by trying to subvert and weaken its opponents and spreading violence. As its recent proposals show, it seems more committed to the reformulation of apartheid than to its abandonment.

Therefore, this is not the time to lift existing pressures, especially sanctions, against apartheid South Africa. To do so would be to encourage the forces of violence and apartheid and to help postpone the advent of freedom and democracy in our country. We must not allow this to happen. In this regard, we are confident that the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid and the Centre against Apartheid will do the right thing and that, in whatever they do, they will do so in consultation with the South African people.

... We attach particular urgency to the need for action which not only will arrest and end the violence that currently assails our country, but which will also help to place the transition process on firm ground and accelerate it towards the emergence and consolidation of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

Failure to guarantee this outcome would constitute no less than a prescription for the outbreak of a civil war of the most frightening dimensions in our already troubled country. We have therefore launched and actively kept in motion at least two important initiatives. The first is aimed at ending the violence and isolating the forces who promote it. To this end we have continued to involve the widest possible political spread of our people and their various political, civic and religious organizations in the search for peace.

...

Despite any number of pitfalls and obstacles, we take pride in the fact that this initiative was crowned by the holding of a

convention on 14 September between the National Party and IFP, convened by the churches and interested sections of the business community. The towering achievement of this convention was a formal agreement between the three principals that violence is detrimental to the real interests of all South Africans particularly at this stage in the political life of the country, and their collective decision to therefore commit themselves to working in cooperation towards ending the violence.

To buttress this agreement with substance, they also agreed to form a joint peace commission to work for the implementation of the first agreement. It is to have, under its wing, five subcommissions charged with the responsibility, inter alia;

- To draw up a code of conduct for the regime's police and soldiers, a code of conduct for all political organizations and parties;

- To monitor the implementation of these codes of conduct;

- To coordinate peace activities between the principals;

- To review, report, and make recommendations on the situation; and, in general,

- To strive to engage the widest possible non-partisan constituency in the search for peace.

The recent massacre, at Thokoza, of 18 people and the injury of 16 more, as they were returning from the funeral of assassinated civic leader, Sam Ntuli, is a grim reminder of the gravity of the problem of violence in our country. ... It underlines our longstanding assertion that the regime's seeming inability to bring to book the perpetrators of these and other acts of violence is but a thin disguise for the regime's reluctance to act decisively to end the violence. It also points, once more, to the complicity of the regime's security forces in the promotion of that violence. It attacks the chances of success of the National Peace Accord and reinforces suspicions about the regime's real agenda. ... It highlights the fact that the regime has indeed become the most significant obstacle to peaceful and meaningful change in South Africa. It sharpens the urgency of the need for an interim government of national unity to supervise the transition process.

ANC remains steadfastly committed to the search for peace. We have also launched and are actively promoting an initiative to create a patriotic front of organizations opposed to apartheid and committed to a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

A wide range of organizations, including the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) and the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO), have shown strong interest in this initiative and are involved in campaigning for it. Its objective is to oppose the forces of reaction with a united force based on issues that unite us. Under the umbrella of this front, each member-organization will retain its independence and identity.

Our common demand for the election of a constituent assembly mandated to draw up a constitution for a free and democratic South Africa has already been identified and embraced as one such uniting issue. We shall continue to strive to broaden the basis of agreement while seeking to involve more and more parties in the patriotic front. We believe that the oppressed people of South Africa speaking, at least, with coordinated voices, or, at best, with a united voice, stand the best chance of prevailing on behalf of freedom and democracy.

...

**VII. STATEMENT BY DR. MOTSOKO PHEKO, REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS OF AZANIA**

On behalf of PAC, I join honourable previous speakers in expressing solidarity with the political prisoners in South Africa and to remember those who died for national liberation and self-determination and brought the struggle where it is today.

...

Prisoners in South Africa have ended not only in jail, but at the gallows in Pretoria. Between 1962 and 1964 alone 202 of our POQO freedom fighters were executed by the regime. As a result of the Mbashe Operation, 17 members of PAC were hanged in one day alone. One family on that day lost four sons.

It is therefore, imperative that the supreme sacrifice such gallant sons of Africa have paid to eradicate apartheid and destroy colonialism in our sacred fatherland, is not exchanged for political expediency and betrayal.

There is a carefully orchestrated campaign of deception by certain quarters that there is "substantial" change in South Africa warranting the lifting of sanctions and other measures against the racist colonialist regime. The efforts of the exponents of this campaign are now geared not at dismantling apartheid and liberating the victims of apartheid, but at rehabilitating apartheid South Africa. This campaign is intended

to confuse the primary objective of the Azanian struggle for national liberation and self-determination.

...

Yes, there is a change in South Africa. Basically, it is a change of tactics and not of heart.

...

Addressing the recent congress of his Party at Bloemfontein in September 1991, Mr. F.W. de Klerk said: "The National Party has never been asked for a mandate to hand over power to anybody ... we are certainly not prepared to exchange one form of domination for another."

We ask Mr. de Klerk, is there domination in Zimbabwe or Namibia or Botswana? Is there domination in Britain or in the United States of America? ...

...

The South African leader has boasted of "freedom and values built over three and half centuries". By this he means the vile system of apartheid and colonialism. The 1973 Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid has declared this odious system of dehumanization a crime against humanity.

Our answer to Mr. de Klerk's so-called "freedom and values" is:

"If we learned to read and write, we have also lost our land and our freedoms national sovereignty; if we have known new spiritual flights and values, we have learned also new spiritual depths of sorrow and despair. If we have acquired a knowledge of and faith in God, we have also seen how his holy name can be taken in vain and used for plunder, deceit and murder... Altogether we have been losers by the coming of the White man to our country..."

... In 1990 we lost about 10,000 lives. This year our people have again been dying like flies. The insensitivity of many members of the international community to this genocide is disturbing. Would the same attitude be shown to this genocide if the people who are dying on this unacceptable genocidal scale were Whites?

The controlled media with its despicable gutter journalism has portrayed this genocide as mere "Black-on-Black violence". Even if it were, it is unacceptable. Africans are a colonized people in South Africa. They do not rule themselves. They have

been under foreign and alien rule ever since they were colonized by Britain. And there is nowhere in the world where people can die on such a scale and have the blame put on the victims of colonialism and apartheid while Mr. de Klerk collects many "rewards" awarded by the regime's traditional backers and its new converts.

The truth of the matter is that the genocide of Africans by the regime is the implementation of its conspiracy and strategy to reduce the African population while massively recruiting White immigrants especially from East European countries. ...

...

The genocide of the Africans is committed not only through open physical violence. African women are being sterilized. ... African men are given drinks that render them impotent. ... Askaris suffering from acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) are being used by the regime's agents. ... A committee on methods of encouraging murders among Africans was also to be established.

Our President, Mr. Clarence Makwetu, pointed out on 14 September 1991 that much of the violence in the townships was perpetrated not by ordinary people but by faceless professional assassins. President Makwetu criticized the National Peace Accord for a glaring omission of this fact. He said:

"For this reason, we are unable to sign the proposed Accord and we rather propose the involvement of the international community in the investigation and monitoring of the situation in the townships to ascertain who is responsible for the violence. The Harmse Commission appointed by Mr. de Klerk has failed dismally to do the job. Nobody was brought to book"

He further stated that:

"PAC has not been involved in the perpetration of violence, but we are maximally active in peace related efforts ... We welcome the principle of working for peace in the townships running through the Accord and although we will not sign it, PAC makes this solemn pledge that we will, as we have done in the past, spare no effort, brave all obstacles and work tirelessly for peace among the Africans."

We advocated the formation of the Patriotic Front as early as 1968. A PAC document on the subject was submitted to the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In July 1990, when Mr. de Klerk offered to negotiate, PAC called a Congress of the Organizations of the Oppressed at Johannesburg.

At its National Congress on 7 to 9 December 1990, PAC passed a resolution and mandated its leadership to vigorously pursue the formation of a Patriotic Front. PAC has always held that the dispossessed Africans could not negotiate genuinely and create political stability while not united. PAC therefore, rejoices that the formation of the Patriotic Front is now planned to take place at Durban on 25 to 27 October.

After the formation of the Patriotic Front, PAC subscribes to a pre-constituent assembly conference of the parties to discuss the modalities of setting up or electing a constituent assembly to draw a new constitution that eradicates apartheid and colonialism. Issues such as the transitional authority or interim government are still to be ironed out. PAC favours a transitional authority that involves the international community such as the United Nations and OAU. The South African regime is a product of colonialism. It has no sovereignty in our country. It cannot be player and referee. There is absolute need for a neutral and impartial chairman or body to be involved.

PAC wants to see the liberation of Azania consolidating and strengthening Africa, not weakening our continent. PAC wants to see the dismantling of apartheid as the fulfilment of the vision of our OAU founding fathers when they declared that Africa's ultimate goal was the liberation of every inch of African soil from racist colonialist rule and the beginning of rapid reconstruction of Africa economically and technologically for the social emancipation of this great continent. PAC shall not evade its historic mission for Africa. This is our inescapable and moral goal.

PAC is concerned about the uplifting of the African people economically and socially. ... PAC is demanding the redistribution of resources, especially land. At present the Europeans in South Africa control 106,800,000 hectares of land. This means that 13 per cent of the population in our country has 87 per cent of the land while the overwhelming indigenous African majority has only 13 per cent of the land. Consequently Africans suffer poverty, underdevelopment, highest child mortality and shortest life expectancy. 50 per cent of our babies die before they reach the age of six. The repeal of the Land Act of 1913 by the de Klerk regime is meaningless while he is keeping the loot for the White minority.

Much has been said about the sovereignty of countries such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which was lost 50 years ago. The Africans of Azania have a sovereignty that they lost much earlier than that and yet nothing is being said about this national loss. There was no country called "South Africa" before 20 September 1909. ...

Lastly, PAC demands the release of all political prisoners. ... For in South Africa, political prisoners have always been treated worse than criminals.

Our people who want to go home and have to get passports from the regime's embassies are subjected to much interrogation. These passports are given on the basis of their political views and are a form of blackmail. Many of our people now feel very strongly that it would be best if they were issued travel documents to return to their country by UNHCR.

PAC rejects the view that those who have committed the crime of apartheid - a crime against humanity - can now claim the dubious right to confer so-called indemnity on the victims of apartheid. We insist that if the regime means well, it must declare a general amnesty that does not subject our people to the indignities of interrogations and categorization. True indemnity, in any case, can only be conferred by the victims of apartheid on the perpetrators of crime.

**VIII. STATEMENT BY MRS. MAHA G. KHOURY,
REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINE**

Today, we reach out in solidarity for our brothers and sisters in the prisons of the racist regime of Pretoria.

Today, we are sending a very important message to all the political prisoners in South Africa, telling them that their long and bitter struggle against racism and apartheid and their struggle for freedom, independence, democracy and equality will not go in vain. That the many countries of the world do hear their cries for freedom and self-determination, and are determined to help them in achieving their goals.

We are observing this day at a time when little progress has been made in this regard. The release of some South African political prisoners is positive, although it is by no means sufficient. The racist apartheid regime continues to exist and still insists on violating not only General Assembly resolution 1881 (XVIII) of 11 October 1963, requesting the release of all South African political prisoners; but also all the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions that were adopted in subsequent years.

The Palestinian people extend a special salute to their brothers and sisters, the South African political prisoners. We share a common experience, we are also the victims of racism, and occupation.

Like the people of South Africa, the Palestinian people appeal to the world community to stop this menace. To take concrete action, as they did in other instances, towards bringing about justice and freedom to the peoples of South Africa and Palestine.

Apartheid and occupation are illegal and should not be tolerated, rather, they should be dismantled.

**IX. STATEMENT BY H.E. PROFESSOR IBRAHIM GAMBARI (NIGERIA),
CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID**

... We are gathered today not only to show our solidarity with political prisoners of South Africa but to reiterate our conviction that no South African prisoner, whose motivation for his/her acts was political, and who act to oppose the obnoxious apartheid system, should continue to remain in prison.

...

This day, therefore, provides us an opportunity to reflect on the past and look to the future. One lesson of the past is that the struggle for freedom and equity have price tags, which, unfortunately, includes loss of lives. Our brothers and sisters from South Africa have, over the years, paid this supreme price and, regrettably, this is still ongoing.

... The dramatic developments that have occurred in South Africa within the last two years may not have been thinkable if there were not men and women who, through their endurance of hardship and pain in the jails of the apartheid system, were willing to rise up and say no to oppression, exploitation as well as to racism. All these efforts and sacrifices have today made it possible for us to now start looking with greater optimism to the day when South Africa will become a democratic, free and non-racial and non-sexist society.

There are grounds for optimism for the future. However, we must be concerned today that one and a half years since the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid was adopted, and since President de Klerk declared his intention to eradicate apartheid, there are still hundreds of political prisoners in the jails of South Africa, including the homeland of Bophuthatswana. It is unfortunate that while the issue of political exiles, after the agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has had a positive turn, inadequate consultations and mechanisms, and possible narrow political exigencies have prevented the complete resolution of the issue of the release of political prisoners. This is a pity because we have seen progress on other

fronts, and I am referring here to the Peace Accord which was signed a month ago and which, despite some disquieting incidents, appears for the time being to be generally respected.

The Special Committee against Apartheid strongly urges the authorities of South Africa to remove all the remaining obstacles towards genuine negotiations. Good faith should be demonstrated by all sides so that obstacles would be completely removed from the path of the overall political process towards the peaceful end of apartheid. We do look forward with anticipation to the convening of the all party forum where all the leaders of South Africa would start discussing the constitutional future of their country.

The Secretary-General, in his second progress report on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration, emphasizes that a meeting of all parties should now be at the top of the political agenda. However, he also cautions us that the process in South Africa towards the eradication of apartheid might be lengthy and even vulnerable.

This brings me to the issue of the responsibilities of the international community. The Special Committee proposed earlier this year that the international community should follow a two-track approach namely:

- Pressure on the South African authorities until a new constitution is in place;

- Assistance to the anti-apartheid forces and the disadvantaged sectors of the South African society.

As the process unfolds, the nature of this pressure, of courses, will have to be adjusted.

Assistance to the democratic forces in South Africa is another important element of the policy mix. The Special Committee has already taken initiatives regarding the educational needs of South Africans and will soon turn its attention to the socio-economic inequalities in that country which, as the Secretary-General has underlined, can be an obstacle to negotiations.

In this context, all assistance shall be needed for the returning political exiles and the released political prisoners. On this day, on behalf of the Special Committee, I wish to call on the international community to provide effective assistance to those who have been fighting a struggle which is truly our own struggle, i.e., the struggle for freedom, justice and equality. I wish to close by expressing the wish of all of you that today

is the last time we observe the day of solidarity with South African political prisoners.
